

Dear Family:

Unit 5 introduces your child to the **schwa**. This is defined as a vowel with an unexpected sound. When a word contains a schwa, the vowel most often sounds like a short **u** or a short **i**, but not necessarily equal to it. An example is the word **salad**. The second **a** sounds similar to a short **i**, but not exactly like it. Schwa is marked as follows:

s ^əă l a d
c c

Often, the second syllable of a two-syllable word is **unaccented** (or not emphasized) and contains a vowel that is not easily heard correctly. In these cases the schwa sound is “swallowed up.” If this **unaccented second syllable** ends with the consonant **n**, the vowel sound may be “lost” (as in the word **mitten** = /mit n/.) And when the letter **e** is followed by **t** in an unaccented second syllable, the **e** sounds like /ĭ/, as in **velvet**.

Schwa often does not pose a problem for students when reading. I will teach them to try the /ū/ sound if a word does not sound right. However, schwa may be troublesome when spelling. I will teach students to listen carefully for a **schwa** and let them know that spelling for this vowel sound can be treated like a sound option. They will learn to identify the **schwa** by indicating which vowel has the unexpected sound. Once we work with schwa, they will realize it is not so bad!

Lastly, I will be working on additional dictionary skills to help students look up words with spelling options.

Sincerely,

The 3rd Grade Teachers



Foundations Grade 3

UNIT 5

Skill Words:

The skill words below may not be the tested words. These words reflect the skills/patterns taught in this unit. Our focus is on learning word patterns, not memorizing specific words.

Sound Alike Words:

Your child should be able to read and spell **sound alike words** from memory in order to match spelling with meaning.

Trick Words:

Your child should be able to read and spell **trick words** from memory. Trick words do not follow usual spelling patterns, they are "tricky" and need to be memorized.

Week 1:

Skill Words:

talent
problem
random
method
denim
wagon
lemon
tendon
dragon
melon

Sound Alike Words:

weather/whether

Trick Words:

brother

Sentence:

Can I have a bite of this lemon?

Week 2:

Skill Words:

magnet
ticket
bandit
habit
limit
trumpet
racket
helmets
cricket
bucket

Sound Alike Words:

father/farther

Trick Words:

carry

Sentence:

Frank will finish the planet project at last!

Name: _____

Date: _____

UNIT

5



Cursive Connectives Practice Review Worksheet

Practice These Connectives! This worksheet provides practice with connecting cursive letters that have been taught in **previous Units**. These clusters are for practice and may not be real words. Practice each set of connectives several times and be sure to leave a space between each set as shown in the example on line 1.

dg dg dg dg dg

qu qu qu qu qu

qu dg qu dg qu dg

dog dog dog dog dog

quit quit quit quit quit

greed greed greed greed greed

quad quad quad quad quad

legs legs legs legs legs

Forward Slant, most commonly used by right-handed students.

Name: _____

Date: _____

UNIT
5

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	<i>dg dg dg dg dg</i>	
	<i>qu qu qu</i>	
	<i>qu dg</i>	
	<i>dg</i>	
	<i>quit</i>	
	<i>gred</i>	
	<i>quad</i>	
	<i>legs</i>	

Backward Slant, most commonly used by left-handed students.



Do the "Find the Schwa" Activity

Have your child read the words and underline or "scoop" the syllables. Does the second syllable have a **schwa** vowel sound? Mark each syllable as closed and be sure to mark the vowel in each syllable as **short** (˘) or **schwa** (ə).

seldom
c c

nutshell

punish
c c

muffin

wagon

salad

ribbon

gallon

relish

limit

seven

pollen

topic

catfish

cabin

falcon

lesson

exit

mitten

public

**Guess Which One**

Read the sentence(s). Write the correct Sound Alike Word from the box on the lines below.

weather

whether

- 1 I think that the hot _____ is amazing!
- 2 Do you want to come home to escape the wet _____?
- 3 I do not know _____ or not I want to munch that much cake.
- 4 Does Frank know _____ he will quit the travel club or not?

**Sentence Creation**

Create one sentence for each Sound Alike Word. The sentence should use the word correctly *and* demonstrate the meaning of the word.

- 1 _____

- 2 _____



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jăcket
c c

panic

edit

sŭbmit
c c

helmet

puppet

velvet

bucket

ticket



Do the “Dictionary Skills” Activity

Have your child put the words from the box in alphabetical order on the lines below. Which word will come first in the dictionary? Second?

pocket

random

salad

confuse

planet

travel

lemon

packet

volume

contact

absent

method

1 _____ 5 _____ 9 _____

2 _____ 6 _____ 10 _____

3 _____ 7 _____ 11 _____

4 _____ 8 _____ 12 _____

**Guess Which One**

Read the sentence(s). Write the correct Sound Alike Word from the box on the lines below.

father

farther

- 1 Which man ran _____?
- 2 Jake and his _____ are best friends.
- 3 The _____ you travel the more you know.
- 4 The plane will have to travel _____ than the ship.
- 5 Her _____ has a bike and a helmet.

**Sentence Creation**

Create one sentence for each Sound Alike Word. The sentence should use the word correctly *and* demonstrate the meaning of the word.

- 1 _____

- 2 _____
